CLAIMS

1. A system for facilitating language learning wherein

    –   said system is used upon samples of a target language, wherein each of said samples is called in this invention ORIGINAL EXTRACT,

    –   said target language can be a foreign language or it can be the native language of the learner,

    wherein said system comprises means to show one or more BLIND EXTRACTS for at least one of said original extracts, wherein

    –   said blind extracts are graphical entities whose fragments have certain correspondence with fragments of an original extract to which they are associated,

    –   in the most general case, said certain correspondence can be such that there might exist fragments in some original extract that do not correspond to any fragment of the blind extract to which it is associated, and there might exist fragments in some blind extract that do not correspond to any fragment of the original extract to which it is associated,

    and wherein said system can be used in isolation or as a complement in an approach orientated to language learning, to present samples of a foreign language or to correct a problem in the utilization of the native language.

2. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said blind extracts are made up of a series of characters.

3. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the words of said blind extract biunivocally correspond to the groups of characters of the blind extract to which said original extract is associated, i.e. for each word of said original extract there exists a group of characters in said blind extract, and for each group of characters of said blind extract there exist one only word in said original extract.

4. A system as claimed in claim 1, comprising at least a blind extract which is a SEPARATED SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, whose distinguishing feature is that it is divided in first parts which are differentiated visually and which correspond to the words of the original extract and wherein said first parts are divided into second parts which are differentiated visually and which correspond to the syllables of said original extract.

5. A system as claimed in claim 5, comprising at least a SEPARATED DISCRETE SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a separated syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that would exist if each word in the associated original extract would be pronounced in an isolated fashion.

6. A system as claimed in claim 5, comprising at least a SEPARATED CONTINUOUS SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a separated syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that would exist if the associated original extract would be pronounced in a continuous fashion .

7. A system as claimed in claim 1, comprising at least a blind extract that is a LINKED SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, whose distinguishing feature is that it is divided in parts which are visually differentiated and which correspond to the syllables of the words of said original extract, and there do not exist means to separate the fragments that are associated to different words.

8. A system as claimed in claim 1, comprising at least a LINKED DISCRETE SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a linked syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that there would exist if the words of the associated original extract would be pronounced in isolation.

9. A system as claimed in claim 1, comprising at least a LINKED CONTINUOUS SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a linked syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that there would exist if the associated original extract would be pronounced in a continuous fashion.

10. A system as claimed in claim 1, comprising at least a blind extract that is a SEGMENTUAL BLIND EXTRACT, whose distinguishing features is that it is divided in parts which are visually differentiated and which correspond to the segments of the words of said original extract, wherein said segments are units of sound of lower level than syllables.

11. A system as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 10, wherein in the continuous blind extracts there exist graphical means that indicate the syllables or sounds that have undergone a transformation when the reproduction of the associated extract changes from

individually pronouncing the words to pronouncing all the words in a continuous fashion, and wherein said graphical means are applied to the parts of the blind extract that correspond to said syllables or sounds that undergo a transformation.

12. A system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means to aurally reproduce some fragment of some original extract, wherein said reproduction can be performed aurally emphasizing certain parts of said fragment by altering tone, intensity or duration of sounds.

13. A system as claimed in claim 12, wherein said parts of said reproduction that are aurally emphasized are some or all the syllables of the words of said fragment.

14. A system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means to graphically emphasize in a sequential fashion certain parts of at least one blind extract among said blind extracts, using for example a special font format or some other graphical means.

15. A system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said parts that are graphically emphasized are the fragments of said blind extract that correspond to words of said original extract.

16. A system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said parts that are graphically emphasized are the fragments of said blind extract that correspond to syllables of said original extract, which can be reproduced either in a continuous fashion or reproduced word by word.

17. A system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said graphical emphasizing is performed simultaneously to the aural reproduction of a fragment of the extract, so that the parts that are reproduced at a given moment are approximately the same parts that are graphically emphasized at the same moment.

18. A system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means to show the phrase structure of at least one of said blind extracts in some form, such as for example in one of the following forms:
  - the escalator tree,
  - the tower tree,
  - the phrase tree,
  - other type of form.

19. A system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a high pass filter that is applied to said aural reproductions and which enhances the high frequencies, and which allows to more easily distinguish the parts of the reproductions that facilitate its phonological identification.

20. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said system is a computerized system comprising:
   - hardware means,
   - a computer program, which allows a user to interact with at least one of said blind extracts, and which allows the user to select fragments of said blind extract and to perform aurally reproductions of one or more fragments of said original extract, wherein a fragment can be the a segment, a syllable, a word, a group of words or the whole original extract itself.

21. A system as claimed in claim 1, which is a television system, which can be or not be interactive, so that the appropriate extracts are shown in the television and the appropriate reproductions are performed.

22. A system as claimed in claim 1, which is based on the combination of a book and a audio reproducing equipment, wherein one or more of said blind extracts are shown in the book with the appropriate emphasizing.

23. A method for facilitating language learning wherein
   - said method is used upon samples of a target language, wherein each of said samples is called in this invention ORIGINAL EXTRACT,
   - said target language can be a foreign language or it can be the native language of the learner,

   wherein said method comprises the inspection of one or more BLIND EXTRACTS for at least one of said original extracts, wherein
   - said blind extracts are graphical entities whose fragments have certain correspondence with fragments of an original extract to which they are associated,
   - in the most general case, said certain correspondence can be such that there might exist fragments in some original extract that do not correspond to any fragment of the blind extract to which it is associated, and there might exist fragments in some blind extract that do not correspond to any fragment of the original extract to which it is associated,

and wherein said method can be used in isolation or as a complement in an approach orientated to language learning, to present samples of a foreign language or to correct a problem in the utilization of the native language.

5   24. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said blind extracts are made up of a series of characters.

25. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the words of said blind extract biunivocally correspond to the groups of characters of the blind extract to which said original extract is

10   associated, i.e. for each word of said original extract there exists a group of characters in said blind extract, and for each group of characters of said blind extract there exist one only word in said original extract.

26. A method as claimed in claim 23, comprising at least a blind extract which is a

15   SEPARATED SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, whose distinguishing feature is that it is divided in first parts which are differentiated visually and which correspond to the words of the original extract and wherein said first parts are divided into second parts which are differentiated visually and which correspond to the syllables of said original extract.

20   27. A method as claimed in claim 26, comprising at least a SEPARATED DISCRETE SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a separated syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that would exist if each word in the associated original extract would be pronounced in an isolated fashion.

25   28. A method as claimed in claim 26, comprising at least a SEPARATED CONTINUOUS SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a separated syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that would exist if the associated original extract would be pronounced in a continuous fashion .

30

29. A method as claimed in claim 23, comprising at least a blind extract that is a LINKED SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, whose distinguishing feature is that it is divided in parts which are visually differentiated and which correspond to the syllables of the words of said original extract, and there do not exist means to separate the fragments that are associated to different words.

30. A method as claimed in claim 23, comprising at least a LINKED DISCRETE SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a linked syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that there would exist if the words of the associated original extract would be pronounced in isolation.

31. A method as claimed in claim 23, comprising at least a LINKED CONTINUOUS SYLABIC BLIND EXTRACT, which is a linked syllabic blind extract whose distinguishing feature is that said syllables correspond to the syllables that there would exist if the associated original extract would be pronounced in a continuous fashion.

32. A method as claimed in claim 23, comprising at least a blind extract that is a SEGMENTUAL BLIND EXTRACT, whose distinguishing features is that it is divided in parts which are visually differentiated and which correspond to the segments of the words of said original extract, wherein said segments are units of sound of lower level than syllables.

33. A method as claimed in one or more of claims 23 to 32, wherein in the continuous blind extracts graphical means are used to indicate the syllables or sounds that have undergone a transformation when the reproduction of the associated extract changes from individually pronouncing the words to pronouncing all the words in a continuous fashion, and wherein said graphical means are applied to the parts of the blind extract that correspond to said syllables or sounds that undergo a transformation.

34. A method as claimed in claim 23, further comprising the step to aurally reproduce some fragment of some original extract, wherein said reproduction can be performed aurally emphasizing certain parts of said fragment by altering tone, intensity or duration of sounds.

35. A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein said parts of said reproduction that are aurally emphasized are some or all the syllables of the words of said fragment.

36. A method as claimed in claim 23, further comprising the step to graphically emphasize in a sequential fashion certain parts of at least one blind extract among said blind extracts, using for example a special font format or some other graphical means.

37. A method as claimed in claim 36, wherein said parts that are graphically emphasized are the fragments of said blind extract that correspond to words of said original extract.

38. A method as claimed in claim 36, wherein said parts that are graphically emphasized are the fragments of said blind extract that correspond to syllables of said original extract, which can be reproduced either in a continuous fashion or reproduced word by word.

39. A method as claimed in claim 38, wherein said graphical emphasizing is performed simultaneously to the aural reproduction of a fragment of the extract, so that the parts that are reproduced at a given moment are approximately the same parts that are graphically emphasized at the same moment.

40. A method as claimed in claim 23, further comprising the step of showing the phrase structure of at least one of said blind extracts in some form, such as for example in one of the following forms:
    – the escalator tree,
    – the tower tree,
    – the phrase tree,
    – other type of form.

41. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of applying a high pass filter to said aural reproductions which enhances the high frequencies, and which allows to more easily distinguish the parts of the reproductions that facilitate its phonological identification.

42. A computer program that allows to implement the system of one or more of the claims 1 to 22.

43. A computer program that allows to implement the method of one or more of the claims 23 to 41.

44. An object readable by some way that contains one of the computer programs referred to in the claims 42 or 43.

45. A set of structured data that allows to implement the system of one or more of the claims 1 to 22

46. A set of structured data that allows to implement a system that can be used to implement the method of one or more of the claims 23 to 41

47. An object readable by some way that contains one of the sets of structured data referred to in the claims 45 or 46.